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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 NAIROBI 003575

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SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR AF AND CA/VO  
STATE PASS AID  
DHS FOR ICE -- DRO AND IAO  
LONDON, PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CVIS](#) [KPAO](#) [SO](#) [KE](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA -- SELF-DECLARED INDEPENDENT SOMALILAND  
READY TO COOPERATE ON DEPORTATIONS

REF: NAIROBI 3066

SUMMARY

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1. (SBU) The Minister of the Interior of the self-declared independent Republic of Somaliland committed his "government" to full cooperation with the USG should there ever be a need to deport a Somaliland "national" from the United States. He expressed confusion on learning that Somaliland officials had been denied visas in the past few months for reasons related to this issue. The minister made clear that, to his knowledge, the U.S. had never attempted, successfully or unsuccessfully, to deport anyone to Somaliland. He wondered how there could ever have been a perceived pattern of non-cooperation on the issue. Although this minister will likely lose his job as a result of "parliamentary" elections to be held September 29, the Deputy Director General for National Intelligence and Immigration joined the minister in committing to full cooperation. (NOTE: Background on interrelations among "Somaliland," "Puntland" and "Somalia" is also provided, paras 8-13.) END SUMMARY.

2 (SBU) Somalia Watcher traveled August 30-31 to Hargeisa, capital of the self-proclaimed independent Republic of Somaliland, amid extraordinary security precautions (reported septel). The trip was conducted in cooperation with the Somalia Democratization Steering Committee, a donors' group providing indirect financial assistance through NGO implementing partners for the September 29 Somaliland legislative elections. Somalia Watcher conducted "bilateral" meetings with the "Minister of Finance" (reported septel) and the "Minister of Interior", Engineer Ismail Adan Osman. Deputy Director General for National Intelligence and Immigration Mohamed Nur Osman (no relation) accompanied the minister.

VISAS AND DEPORTATIONS

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3. (SBU) Somalia Watcher used the same terms as reported reftel to "demarche" the Somaliland minister on the USG need for cooperation on the deportation of Somaliland nationals from the U.S. back to Somaliland. We noted the link the USG makes under statute between the issuance of visas for travel of Somaliland officials to the U.S. and cooperation on deportations, reminding the minister of the difficulties several officials had experienced in obtaining visas to travel to Los Angeles, CA in June 2005 to attend a conference sponsored by the Somaliland Diaspora. (NOTE: Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) Section 243(d) provides authority to DHS and the Department of State to refuse applications for visas by nationals of any country whose government the Secretary of Homeland Security determines to have denied or

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unreasonably delayed accepting the return of an alien who is a national of that country. END NOTE.) Somalia Watcher made clear to the Somaliland minister that, in the absence of clear willingness to address obstacles that might block deportations to Somaliland, Hargeisa's officials seeking to travel to the United States might be denied the privilege under U.S. statute.

HAS THERE EVER BEEN A DEPORTATION ATTEMPT?

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4. (SBU) The minister immediately expressed his complete understanding of the issues at stake, as well as of the necessity of engaging in a normal two-way immigration policy with Somaliland's "bilateral" partners. He nonetheless was shocked that Somaliland officials had already been subject to visa refusals due at least in part to a perceived pattern of non-cooperation on deportations. He stated that to his knowledge, during his tenure as "Minister of Interior", there had never been a request from the USG for Somaliland to accept the return of one of its nationals. "We have done some work in this regard with the UK and Sweden, but not the

U.S.," the minister stated.

JUST ASK

15. (SBU) Minister Osman stated categorically that the USG had only to inform the Somaliland authorities of the need to return a Somaliland national to obtain Hargeisa's total cooperation. He stipulated only that the deportee's Somaliland origins needed to be carefully established. Somalia Watcher stressed that, while such an expression of cooperation was most welcome, actually entering into contact with the minister or his working-level counterparts had been extremely problematic in the past. The minister then provided the following contact information for direct USG - Ministry of Interior communication:

Engineer Ismail Adan Osman  
Minister of Interior  
(Secretary: "Amina")  
Cell tel no. 1: (252)(2) 424-014  
Cell tel no. 2: (252)(2) 371-957  
Office tel: (252) 828-3675  
Fax: (252)(2) 523-225  
email no. 1: engosman@hotmail.com  
email no. 2: wagudaha@hotmail.com

Hussein Hassan Gulet  
Director General for National Intelligence and Immigration  
Department  
Cell tel no. 1: (252)(2) 436-179  
Cell tel no. 2: (252)(2) 370-683  
Office tel/fax: (252)(2) 523-248  
email: husenguledd@hotmail.com

Somaliland National Police Department  
email: somalilandpolicehq@hotmail.com

16. (SBU) The minister agreed that, given the difficulties in telephonic communications, direct contact should be made by email. He requested that all communications regarding deportees be addressed to him, at both of his email addresses, and copied to the DG for Intelligence and Immigration, as well as the Somaliland National Police Headquarters address.

COMMENT:

17. (SBU) It appears that there have not been any attempts in the past, either successful or unsuccessful, to enforce a deportation order against any Somaliland "national". Post therefore suggests that there would be no grounds to bring to bear INA Section 243(d) when considering applications for nonimmigrant or immigrant visas for Somaliland officials. Although there are many other reasons for a visa request from such an official to be given very close scrutiny, until the USG has some reason to make a properly formulated determination on non-cooperation on the part of the Somaliland authorities, there should be no further consideration of this issue when we process their visa applications. END COMMENT.

BACKGROUND: "WHAT IS SOMALILAND?"

18. (SBU) The "Republic of Somaliland" announced its independence from Somalia on May 18, 1991, within the borders of the colonial-era British Protectorate of Somaliland. The Republic occupies the northwestern portion of the internationally recognized territory of Somalia, stretching from the border with Djibouti in the west to an as-yet still disputed border with the Puntland Autonomous State of Somalia in the east, and from the Gulf of Aden in the north to the Ethiopian border to the south. Over the last 14 years, as some 14 efforts to establish central governance in Mogadishu and the rest of Somalia have failed, Somaliland has embarked on a trajectory of increasing political stabilization and economic growth. A constitution was approved by referendum in May 2001. Municipal elections were held in December 2002, and a fiercely contested Presidential election in April 2003 ended with the opposition peacefully conceding defeat to the incumbent by a margin of just 80 votes out of nearly half a million cast. A Parliament is to be elected on September 29, 2005, competing the democratization of the Republic of Somaliland.

19. (SBU) BACKGROUND CONTINUED. Somaliland has been an island of peace and something resembling self-governance, while the rest of Somalia has lurched through wave after wave of civil war and intra-clan fighting. It has operated as a de facto independent state for 14 years, despite the fact that the authorities in Hargeisa have precious few resources -- The "Ministry of Interior's" principal telephone lines are the cell phones in the Minister's pocket. Somaliland has not obtained de jure independence, given the international convention that unilateral declarations of secession in Africa will not be recognized. Somaliland needs there to be

a government in the rest of Somalia, so that it can negotiate terms of its independence in a way that is acceptable to the African Union, the United Nations and the International Community. Thus the U.S. does not acknowledge Somaliland's independence, and has no formal diplomatic relations with the Somaliland authorities.

BACKGROUND:"AND WHAT IS PUNTLAND?"

10. (SBU) The "Puntland Autonomous State" occupies a territory stretching from the disputed border with Somaliland to the east to the very tip of the Horn of Africa at the Indian Ocean to the west, and from the Horn-Gulf of Aden coast to the north to approximately the town of Galcaio in the middle of Mudug District to the south. Puntland announced in 1998 its existence as an autonomous regional administration under the leadership of Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed. Unlike Somaliland, Puntland has never had secessionist intentions; nonetheless, the Autonomous Administration has had some success in running public affairs in the territory, and has exhibited some semblance of democratic institutions.

11. (SBU) BACKGROUND CONTINUED. The major warlords and individuals of political ambition in Puntland have taken part in all the successive efforts to bring central governance back to Somalia. The former "President" of Puntland, Col. Yusuf, participated in the creation, and was elected President, of the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in October 2004. The current "President" of Puntland, Mohamed Muse Herse (AKA "Gen. Ade Muse") was elected to office by the "Puntland Parliament". He occupies a position akin to a State Governor in the U.S., although place in office by election at the level equivalent of the State Legislature.

BACKGROUND:  
TO TALK TO "SOMALIA," WHOM DO WE CALL?

12. (SBU) For the United States to engage in bilateral diplomatic relations with "Somalia", it assumes direct engagement with TFG President (former Puntland President) Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi, Foreign Minister Abdullahi Sheik Ismail, and the other ministers of the TFG. The USG would not have bilateral diplomatic relations with the "president" of Puntland, nor with the "President of Somaliland."

13. (SBU) BACKGROUND CONTINUED. However, in the current situation, the USG is obliged to be more nuanced. The TFG has not been able to establish itself in the Somali capital, and has no control over its national territory, whether defined within the internationally recognized borders of Somalia, or as only that area that is not "Somaliland". The TFG President is not able to enter Mogadishu, the capital city, due to conflicts with ministers of his own government. Although the USG communicates its views to the TFG President, there is no expectation that he can make commitments of any kind on behalf of the Somali state. Somaliland, on the other hand, is able to meet some of the obligations normally associated with a sovereign government. It is not, however, acknowledged as a sovereign state, and so USG diplomatic relations with the Somaliland authorities can only be informal in nature. END BACKGROUND.

BELLAMY